

Biennale of the Swiss painters abroad

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Contents

Biennale of the Swiss Painters Abroad

Biennale of the Swiss Painters Abroad	3
Civics	6
The Jura Regions and the Watchmaking Industry	8
Official Communications	
– Interview with Minister Max Leippert	9
– Solidarity Fund	11
Local News	12–16
Camp Fun	17
Job Possibilities for Young Swiss Abroad	20
Widow's Pensions for Divorced Women Domiciled Abroad	22
Auguste Piccard's Exploration of the Stratosphere	23

Marriage of a Swiss woman

A Swiss woman wishing to retain her Swiss nationality on marrying a foreign national *must* make a declaration in writing to that effect, *before the marriage*, on a form obtainable from the Swiss diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

Fanfare, speeches and a warm atmosphere characterized this big premiere. Our Swiss artists, coming from all parts of the world, were really honored on this day. Promoted by a noteworthy committee of patrons, a large number of friends and a large audience from home and abroad assembled to admire the displayed works, to make contacts and to renew friendships. Following an introduction by Mr. Claude Mauler, the President of the Organization Committee, Mr. Louis Rossier, the Municipal President of Denges, and Mr. René Retornaz, Central President of the New Helvetic Society, greeted those, who, through their patronage, had graced this first exhibition in Switzerland of Swiss painters abroad. The painter Roland Zahnd, the artistic organizer of the exhibition, spoke on behalf of the Organization Committee. He described the aim of this exhibition as establishing contacts with Swiss painters abroad. He expressed sincere thanks to the authorities for their moral support of this project.

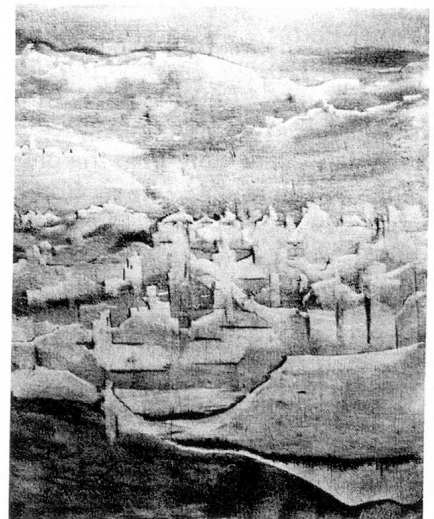
At the same time he expressed regret that this first exhibition had to be limited to figurative painting, and that abstract painters and sculptors, who deserved to have their works displayed, could not be considered.

One is already concentrating one's efforts on the second biennale of 1984. As the success of this opening has shown, the future looks promising. We therefore hope for even greater support from our authorities so that all our painters who deserve the name can take part in the next exhibition.

Mr. Pierre Favre, Vice President of the Alliance culturelle romande, then introduced the 37 artists, who has been chosen by the jury presided over by Mr. Jacques-Edmond Berger. Someone once said «art is the expression of the highest and most vital of life», and like mankind, art knows no limits. It is the only universal language, and the pictorial language as we see it today in the works from Senegal, Mexico, Peru, Reunion, Canada, Germany, France and ten other countries, communicates to us in the same way.

On behalf of the artists present, Mr. Michel Cevey, painter and graphic artist in Frankfurt (Germany), expressed his delight in being able to reach the public in his homeland. «This exhibition is taking place in a village because it is the result of private initiative. A wish was uttered, and we fulfilled it because we were aware of the importance of this wish. We took the first step to show the way and

Christophe Turnau «Ghost town» (Italy)





Claire Allaz-Vouros «Greek Village» (Greece)

to support this initiative. This biennale in the long run rightly aims at promoting ties between Swiss painters active abroad. The will is there to create a lasting cultural tradition. Two years from now, by the time the next biennale takes place, it will already have earned its name. Perhaps it will then be possible, with the help of other institutions, to enlarge the somewhat narrow scope and include other forms such as abstract art.»

The President and founder of the Alliance culturelle romande, Mr. Weber-Perret, then cut the symbolic ribbon, and during the concert the official representatives and the invited guests looked at the exhibition in the presence of the artists whose works were being displayed: Claire Allaz-Vouros, Maya Amrein, Frédéric Andina, Charles Baldesberger, Marthe Baylon, Olivier Berlincourt, Claudia Buetler, Michel Cevey, Ernst-Albrecht Christen, Norbert Clément, Michel Delprete, Maya Dreier, Walter Egloff, Peter-H. Haller, Jitka Konopka, Brigitte Krause,

Carmen Ramalli La Jaluse, Jean-Guy Meister, Lucien Meylan, Benoit-Maurice Musy, Graciela-Maria Piotti, Corinne Rahm, Suzanne Savary, Edith Sommer, Georges Sprungli, Josef-Martin Schibli, Michel Tharin, Christophe Turnau, Adalise Wetz. Afterwards Mrs. Zahnd, the President, presented each artist with a diploma.

Claudia Butler «Metamorphosis» (USA)



After 5 p.m. the exhibition was opened to the public. An outstanding art critic passed the following judgment on the over 120 works exhibited:

«E.-A. Christen (Italy) is said to enjoy a good reputation in his country of residence. He is an outstanding painter. His work «Balinense Landscape» shows signs of the influence of Gauguin. His «Bouquet» is moving because of its consistency and the narrow range of tones, which give a hazy effect. Impressive are the batiks of Maya Amrein (Mexico). They lend an underwater mood, blue and blue-green around a group of shells. Between the object and its setting there is a fresh harmony.

The still life paintings of Norbert Clément (Peru) owe their well-deserved success to their simplicity: hanging bags, suitcases which have been put down have a spontaneous effect, and the warm light connects the objects closely with the ambiance. The most successful composition among the various works of Balthasar (Walter Egloff) seems to be the one with the title «Mountain Thistle». It is neither a bouquet nor a still life in the true sense of the word. The white of the thistles and the abstract patches in the background are bathed in an amalgam of warm tones without descriptive value. This exclusively pictorial approach is the prelude to «Fantasy Muriel», which is a rhythm of colors.

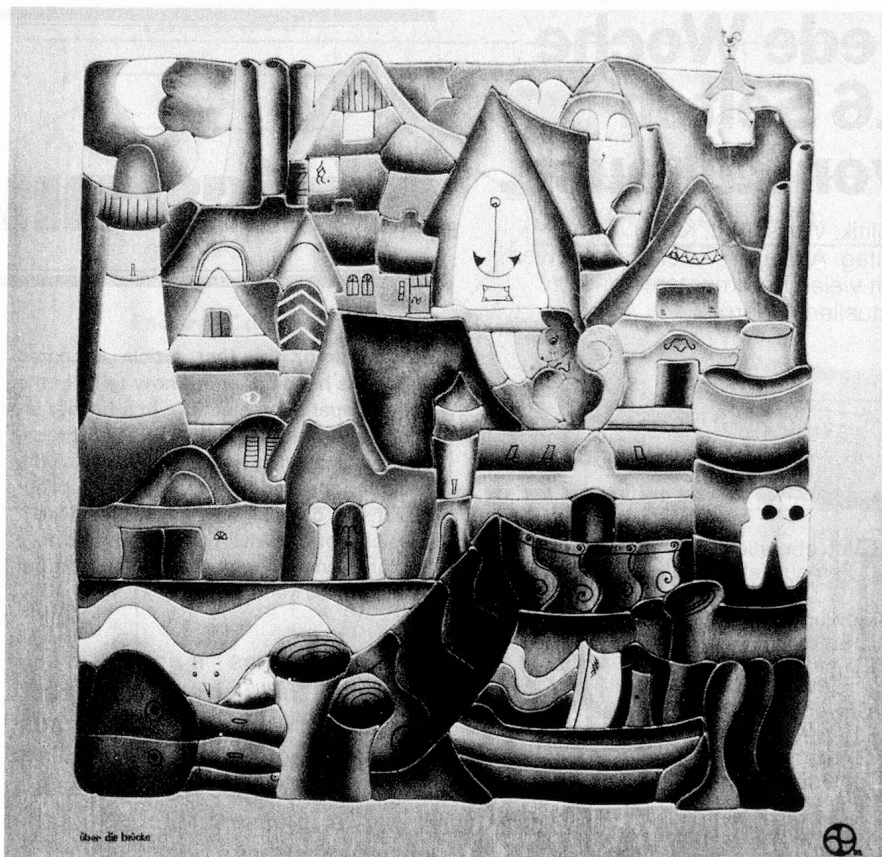
Of the works of Konopka (France) one recalls in particular a pastel «The Woman of Valais». A shade of gray and black for the clothes, blood red for the face suffice to compose this striking portrait, which touches us with its simple truth. Christophe Turnau (Italy) as a landscape painter starts from a surprising basis. On a wooden board, which clearly shows its color and lines and which is made of various wood fibres, he allows a rural landscape to come into

being. This method is more convincing than the monochrome agglomerations, which he paints on canvas as a continuation of the wood style.

The landscape painters have many different styles. Occasionally one simply creates large areas of color, sky-earth, greatly simplified, with few color tones. In the case of Michel Delprete, who lives on Reunion, one has of course landscapes of water and sky in the colors chosen by Maya Amrein. Edith Sommer (Spain) paints in a similar genre, the canvas dominated by the cold of the acrylic.

Kathy Buehler (Spain) captures the warm colors of the Andalusian grass just as well as the effect of twilight on the Catalonian landscape. In the case of Mrs. Elisabeth Boyer-Fischer (France) it is the «Lake of Sempach» which is able to please through the green of the bank and the excellent balance between sky and water. «The Pheasant» is the result of an interesting experiment, but the acrylic is not suitable to express it. We can admire the sober skill with watercolors of Marthe Baylon (France). It is particularly visible in the work «Landscape of Lautrec», where the proliferate vegetation caresses the blotted out roofs, and the birch trees bend. In contrast the works of Jean Jaeger (Paris) display a lot of movement. And so the sky is enlivened by glowing stripes, whose effect is softened by the sea, in the cloudy reflections of twilight. Daring but successful. Jean Huguenin (France) also loves lively skies. But too much warmth is radiated by «Ferme jurassienne» while «Crépuscule d'automne» could use a stronger accent.

Let us mention another beautiful seascape by Bernard Bruchez (Canada), and without saying more the painters Suzanne Savary



Brigitta Krause «Across the Bridge» (FRG)

(France), Claire Allaz-Vouros (Greece), Georges Spruengli and Michel Tharin (France). It was no easy task to assemble these scattered painters here, or even first of all to contact them. This exhibi-

tion therefore deserves a lot of interest.»

Once again many thanks to all the artists for their efforts and for their participation. See you again in two years. *The redaction*

Josef Schibli «Portrait of a House III» (Sweden)



Jitka Konopka «Woman from Canton Valais» (France)

